4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

Musjids.—There are but 5 small Musjids in Coorg, erected by the Mussulmans residing here, whose number does not much exceed one thousand. They are mostly poor people and live chiefly in Mercara, Virájpet and Fraserpet.

g. The Amma-Codagas.

In connection with the preceding subjects, it is natural, to enquire into the condition of the indigenous priesthood. It is clear, that the present intermixture of Hinduism with the more simple religious practices of the Coorgs points back to a time, when the encroaching Brahmins had to encounter popular superstition, upheld by an indigenous priesthood, whose direct descendants the present "Amma-Codagas" seem to be. In language, manners and costume they are hardly to be distinguished from other Coorgs, but are less favoured in appearance; many of them wear the brahminical cord, and all abstain from animal food and fermented liquor. They intermarry with their own people only, a custom which may perhaps hasten their gradual diminution and total extinction, as they constitute but a small portion of the whole population. There are altogether 42 Amma-Codaga houses with 281 inhabitants of whom 97 are men, 90 women and 94 children. They live chiefly in Kiggatnád and Padinálknád, 21 families in the former and 16 in the latter taluq. Like the other Coorgs they are agriculturists and only 3 are in Government service. Their name "Amma-Codaga" or Mother-Coorgs i. e. Coorgs belonging to Mother Kávéri denotes them as men devoted to Kávéri or as priests. With the rest of the Coorg tribe they celebrate in the same manner the great Kávéri and Huttari festivals, but of course as priests performing pûja in their own houses, for they have nothing to do with the Kávéri temple. They have no sacred books or shastras, nor do they exercise any spiritual influence over the people. The history of the old Coorg-priests is shrouded in obscurity. They seem

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13 ***Mercara-taluq*** with its 5 náds and 57 villages occupies
635 the middle of Coorg and covers 209 square miles with a po-
634 pulation of 15,556 souls, amongst whom there are only 2814
[162] Coorgs. Within this small area all the essential features of the province are comprised:—ranges of high hills and solitary peaks, especially Nurokal-betta and Kóte-betta, fertile rice-valleys and parklike grassland, dense cardamom jungles and extensive coffee plantations, stately forest trees and clumps of graceful bamboos, innumerable clear mountain rills and ever
[563] flowing streams and rivers. With the exception of the most easterly portion of the taluq, the climate is everywhere healthy, and the soil fertile and well cultivated both for wet and dry
635 crops. The principal ryots are Coorgs and Gaudas. The
634 four highroads from Mysore, Cannanore, Mangalore and
245 Manjarabád intersect the taluq at Mercara, hence also the
[491] great number of coffee plantations, especially in Mercara-Halérinád. Nearly the whole length of the Sampáji-ghat as far as the 16th mile the hillslopes are covered with the coffee shrub and there are some most successful plantations. On the north-eastern plateau of the ghat, in Horamalnád, the Coorg Coffee Company owns an estate of thousand acres. The oldest is the Mercara estate, further to the west, north and east from it are grouped the beautiful and valuable estates: "Glenmore" near the pretty Jessy-falls; "Belta-
[443] mally" and "Hallery." Thousands of coolies are attracted
[464] to this taluq and on Sundays the Mercara bazaar is crowded with them. On the whole the ryots are of a poor class; the
635 proximity of Head-quarters with its various demands seems
634 to fall heavily upon them and to keep aloof richer farmers,
565 besides the alluring temptations of the Mercara shops may induce the ryots to spend their money imprudently and help to impoverish them. The people of *Halérinád* have always been remarkable for their attachment to the Rájahs' family,

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873 At the request of Government, "Botany" has been added to the list of lessons of the first class. Singing is a general lesson for the musical boys and upwards of 60 Canarese and English songs are practised. The Gymnasium engages twice a week the whole School and the exercises are very popular. A library and some philosophical apparatus are aids for evening lectures for the further instruction of studious youths who left the School.

873 On the whole the Coorg boys, though eager for learning
157 and diligent and persevering in their studies, have not that quickness of perception and brilliancy of intellect which generally distinguishes Brahmin youths. They are slow and lack imagination, but are solid in their acquirements and gifted with sound common sense. In a competitive examination, the quick-witted Brahmin, though not half so well informed, will outstrip the Coorg lad; but give the latter time and he will maintain his place due to his real worth. Coorg
873 lads and others, trained in the Central School, are now found
●464 in every office of the various departments of Government in Coorg and some fill important posts; but it is to be regretted, that many of them did not complete the course of education offered to them. Some time ago the openings in the offices were so many, that the young men could not resist the temptation of well paid employments under Government and relinquished their studies. For the same reason none of the first class pupils has yet attempted to pass the Matriculation examination, though, in the opinion of the Director of Public Instruction, "if these boys were to remain another year under instruction, they might all be prepared to pass the Matriculation test of the Madras University." (vide his Report of 1869-70.)

873 Foreseeing the difficulty of permanently supporting the
658 boarding-houses without the aid of public charity or Government assistance, the general speculation in coffee in Coorg